THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) (a) Yes, Sir

(b) and (c) Government are aware of Pakistan's single minded drive to acquire a nuclear weapons capability. Government are keeping under constant review this as well as all other developments having a bearing on the country's security.

Indo-US vaccine action programme

631. SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA:

DR G VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY:

SHRI MIRZA IRSHADBAIG:

SHRI N. E. BALARAM:

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA.

DR H. P. SHARMA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Indo-US vaccine project has been signed, by-passing the high power biotechnology scientific advisory committee set up by Government; if so, what are the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that the steps postulated in the agreement are likely to come in the way of setting up our own research and development laboratories and would have dangerous impact on the immunity pattern of Indians;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the data obtained by the United States can be used against this country and would expose our country to biological warfare designs of our enemies;

(d) if so, what are the reasons for entering into such an agreement;

(e) whether some eminent Indian scientists etc. have demanded review of the agreement; and

(f) if so, what action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) The Indo-US Vaccine Action Programme (VAP) was signed on 9th July, 1987 after necessary and due examination, clearances and approvals by various concerned Departments and scientific agencies of the Government of India The question of bypassing the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Department of Biotechnology, therefore, does not arise.

(b) No Sir; the Indo-US VAP will not in any manner in the way of indigenous research and development for new, safe and effective vaccines and immunodiagnostics. The VAP will be complementary to and supplement our own indigenous efforts for which already considerable steps have been taken by the Ministry of Health, the ICMR and the Ministry of Science & Technology. The programme will deal with diseases that are already prevalent as major diseases in the country. The work-programme under the VAP would not have any undesirable impact on the so-called immunity pattern of Indians.

(c) No Sir; the VAP is not expected in any way to be used against our country not to expose our country to biological warfare designs of our enemies.

(d) The main objectives for entering into the VAP was to evolve and implement a joint R&D programme with the best scientific specialist groups in US towards research and development of safe and efficacious vaccines against some of the major communicable diseases that presently take a large toll in India in terms of morbidity and mortality and for which, at the present time, effective and safe vaccines are not available. VAP would also

strengthen the capability of Indian scientists and scientific institutions for research and development in the latest technological developments and scientific tools so as to enable the Indian scientists to find solutions to the problems India is facing in some of the important health areas. The VAP is only an R&D programme and does not have any commercial activity under it.

(e) Yes Sir; some apprehensions have been expressed against the Indo-US Vaccine Action Programme.

(f) The Government have carefully reviewed the apprehensions that have been expressed against VAP. It has become clear that these apprehensions are generally based on wrong assumptions, incorrect facts and certain misinformation about the VAP. To provide the critics and the general public with correct facts, as well as the Government's own stand on VAP, the Government has issued two Press Releases on 19-8-87 and 27.9.87. Copies of these Press Releases are annexed as Appendix I and AppendixII. [*See* Appendix CXLIV, Annexure No. 14 and 15] The Indo-US VAP would be implemented to serve our national interest of establishing a strong indigenous capability in the area of research & development in new vaccines and diagnostics against some of the major communicable diseases of high concern to us The Govt. have also created a high level Apex Body, which would also be the Indian side of the Joint Working Group which would also have experts as well as representatives of the Ministry of Science & Technology, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, ICMR and other agencies. This Apex Body will act as the apex clearing/approval agency before any proposal is even put up before the Joint Working Group.

632 [*Transferred to the 18th November.* 1987]

Deployment of additional troops by Pakistan in Siachin

633. DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY:
SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether following the unsuccessful attack by Pak forces in Siachen Sector, Pakistan had deployed in October this year additional troops, specially trained in glacial warfare, opposite to the Ladakh Sector along Khapalu and Leema Sectors in Pakistan;

(b) if so, what is Govtrnment's information in this regard; and

(c) what is Government's reaction in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) and (b) Government have seen some reports about Pakistan having increased its military strength in the Pak occupied Kashmir opposite Ladakh.

(c) Government keep a close watch on all developments in the Siachen Glacier area and take necessary steps to meet any threat.

Per Capita Plan Allocation to the States

634 SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) the state-wise per capita Central Plan allocation during the Sixth Plan period and the Seventh Plan period; and

(b) the reasons why West Bengal's share in the Central Plan allocation is one of the lowest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN